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LETTERS FROM WASHINGTON

ON THE CONSTITUTION, LAWS AND PUBLIC CHARACTERS OF THE UNITED STATES,

By a Foreigner.

(Continued from page 180.)

LETTER III.

WASHINGTON, —, 1818.

HON. B.

I had yesterday the honor of an introduction to Mr. Monroe, the present chief magistrate of the United States. "It is seldom," says Dr. Johnson, "that we find men or places such as we expect to find them," and I must confess that in the present instance, the truth of this observation has been realised. I found Mr. Monroe a little different from what my fancy had presented him, but neither a Lilliputian nor a Patagonian—He appears to be between fifty and sixty years of age, with a form above the middle size, compact, muscular, and indicating a constitution of considerable hardness and vigor; his countenance exhibits lineaments of great severity, and seems as if it had been seldom irradiated by the rays of joy, or softened by the touch of sensibility; he does smile, however, but not like Shakespeare's Cassius,

"in such a sort

As if he mocked himself and scorned his spirit
That could be moved to smile at any thing."

At these moments, there is a benignity and suavity in him, that invite confidence and repel suspicion. He is rather awkward in his address for a man who has mingled so much in polite society and his manners and habiliments are more those of plain country gentleman, than an accomplished statesman and a profound politician. Awkwardness of manners, however, seems to be more common among the Americans, than I had conceived. Their most eminent men are, I think, deficient in that ease, elegance and grace, which distinguish the prominent political characters of France and England. The nature of their government, has a tendency to beget this, by preventing those sacrifices to the graces, which are made in the more refined and polished nations of Europe. The importance and magnitude of their pursuits, and their general association with what we call the lower ranks of society, preclude the acquisition of those exterior embellishments so industriously cultivated by our countrymen. A disciple of Chesterfield, with all his refinement and fascination, would be regarded in this country as a mere *petite-maitre*, calculated only to charm the eye and to fascinate the heart of female ignorance. But I have wandered from

my subject. Mr. Monroe is attached to what was once denominated the republican party; for, at present all party distinctions seem to be lost and the parties themselves wholly amalgamated. In his political career, he has manifested the most unimpeachable and unbending integrity, and though long before the public, has never failed to meet the expectations and to gratify the wishes of the people. That he possesses ambition, will not be denied; but his ambition is limited to the attainment of excellence and distinction within the bounds of patriotism and honor. If he has not the unbending sternness of a Cato, he has the more pleasing and benignant integrity of Fabricius. Mr. Monroe entered early into public life, and has performed the various duties of a soldier, a politician, and a statesman. His mind has been accustomed to dwell on the nature of governments and the revolutions of Europe; subjects so vast produce a correspondent enlargement of intellect, and sweep of comprehension. The mind which is occupied in trifles will not be apt to amaze by its greatness, or astonish by its magnificence; it may glitter, but will never blaze. The peculiar character and magnitude of Mr. Monroe's pursuits have withheld his attention from the minor and less important subjects of literature, and he is very far from what we should call a man of reading or general science. The knowledge he possesses has been acquired more by personal observation, laborious reflection, and frequent conversation, than by repeated perusals of books, to which his occupations would not permit him to devote his time, but he has examined and re-examined that knowledge till it has in fact become his own; recreated by combination, established by practice and tested by experience. It is said, his mind is neither rich nor brilliant, but capable of the most laborious analysis, and the most patient research—not hasty in its decisions, and not easily changed when its decisions are formed. Judgment appears to be his prominent intellectual feature, and in the examination of any object, he seldom suffers it to be darkened by prejudice, or warped by passion. This brief sketch, my lord, will satisfy you I presume, that no man could be chosen, better calculated to fill the important station he holds under this government, and that no man could be more cordially and sincerely disposed to further the interests and to promote the prosperity and happiness of his country. Mrs. Monroe, to whom I was also introduced, is a lady of retired and domestic habits—not elegant, but apparently very amiable. She receives company

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but returns no visits—she seems more attached to the silence and peace of obscurity, than the bustle confusion and glare of public assemblies, but to preserve the custom established by her predecessor, a lady, it is said, of great elegance of manners and dignity of deportment, she gives what we call *conservations*, but what is here termed *drawing rooms*, for the purpose of gratifying the wishes and curiosity of such strangers as may please to visit her and the President. These *conservations* are conducted on principles of republican simplicity, and are widely different from the magnificence and splendor of the English levees. They appeared to me, however, very unpleasant. The rooms are so crowded, the hum of voices so loud and the motion of the company so constant, that the possibility of continuing a conversation on any subject, is wholly precluded, and you are obliged to move with the company, by whom you are jostled every instant, without the power of enjoying the “feast of reason,” or even the pleasure of sense.

Mr. Monroe has never been blessed with male issue, and what is remarkable, out of the five Presidents who have served since the organization of this government, but one has had sons. I mention this merely as a curious circumstance. Mr. J. Q. Adams, the present Secretary of State, is I believe, the only son of the second President of the United States, and is, you know, a man of great talent, information and industry. Mr. Monroe, since his elevation to the presidential chair, is said to have discovered much sagacity in the selection of his cabinet counsel or executive officers. These are the Secretaries of State, War, Treasury, Navy, and Attorney General, who, with one exception, possess the rare gifts of nature in no ordinary degree; and who have already rendered themselves conspicuous in the walks of literature, the fields of eloquence, and on the theatre of politics. You will understand that I do not mean to include in these remarks the Secretary of the Navy, (the exception I have mentioned) with whom I have no acquaintance, and with whom, from what cause I am unable to say, the American public seem to be a little dissatisfied.—Mr. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury, is the same gentleman, to whom you were introduced at Paris, and though he possesses great dignity, wants the graceful elegance of manners of which I have previously spoken. What he was thought of in France I cannot inform you; but it is impossible he could have succeeded amidst the polite and splendid frippery of the Parisian circles—the courtly nonsense, and graceful and elegant nonchalance of a French politician, must have been strikingly and ludicrously contrasted by the republican simplicity and awkward movements of

the American minister. Mr. Crawford has risen from obscurity to the situation he now holds, by the force of native genius; he was employed in his early life in an occupation which is now unfortunately too much degraded, but which ought to be more highly esteemed—I mean that of “teaching the young idea how to shoot.” His next career was at the bar, at which he acquired both emolument and reputation. The excellence of his understanding and the superiority of his intellect soon brought him into public life, where he displayed to advantage those powers with which nature had gifted him—he became ambassador to France, and during his absence, was appointed Secretary of War, and afterwards Minister of Finance. In all of these various situations he has never failed to discover the same powers and energies of mind; he has literally the *mens sana in corpore sano*, and the vigorous and athletic appearance of his body serves as an unerring index to the power and energy of his intellect. It is invidious to make comparisons; but it is by comparisons we are often enabled to arrive at truth. I will therefore endeavor to draw a parallel between the gentlemen of whom I have been speaking. Mr. Monroe and Mr. Crawford, are alike distinguished by integrity of understanding; but the latter has more quickness, and the former a greater range of mind. In the specimens of parliamentary eloquence, which are preserved here only in the ephemeral and fugitive columns of newspapers, and which I have taken the trouble to examine for my own amusement, Mr. Crawford evinces some vigor of imagination, and occasionally some brilliancy of thought—Mr. Monroe has never wished to excel in the flowery parturition of fancy—his compositions display only the soundness of his mind, and the excellence of his sense, without any of the frippery and fastooning of rhetoric, or the meretricious and extrinsic drapery of imagination—Mr. Monroe has more practical knowledge, but is less prompt in his decisions. Mr. Crawford has greater powers of invention, but is less skilful in combination—Mr. Monroe has had more experience, but Mr. Crawford, from his superior quickness of comprehension, has treasured up as many results, and acquired as many facts—Mr. Monroe’s knowledge of mankind is more correct and more practical; but he wants Mr. Crawford’s energy to render it extensively useful. In political shrewdness, moral integrity, and intellectual acquirements, they are supposed to be nearly equal. With this brief parallel, I shall dismiss these gentlemen, and proceed at your desire, to sketch the portrait of the Secretary of War, and the Attorney General. Mr. Calhoun is a young man, of about thirty years of age—his form is above the middle size, but meagre, bony and stiff

der—his face wants beauty, but his eye possesses all the brilliancy and fire of genius. He is a native of the south, and has been educated for the bar. It is not my intention to enter into any abstract speculations, on the influence of climate upon the human intellect. On this subject much ingenuity and learning have been wasted, and the visionary theories of Buffon, Raynal, &c. have been laid aside as the lumber of the schools, or the idle sportings of fancy; but it has always appeared to me that some climates are more propitious to genius, and the rapid development of the intellectual powers than others. The soft and voluptuous climate of Jonia, for example, is better adapted to nourish and expand the genius of man, than the inclement "thick Boeotian air" of northern latitudes. Be this however, as it may; whether Mr. Calhoun be indebted to climate, to nature, or to circumstances for the powers he possesses, he is unquestionably an extraordinary young man. He started up, on the theatre of legislation, a political Roscius, and astonished the veterans around him, by the force of his mind and the singularity and resistlessness of his eloquence. He has the ingenuity without the sophistry of Godwin, to whose mind his bears a striking analogy. On all subjects whether abstract or common, whether political or moral, he thinks with a rapidity that no difficulties can resist, and with a novelty that never fails to delight. He has the brilliancy without the ornament of Burke, the correctness without the literature of Fox. With an invention, which never abandons him, and whose fertility astonishes, he seems to loath the parade of rhetoric and the glitter and decorations of art—his style of eloquence is peculiar and extraordinary—without any apparent pageantry of imagination, or any of the flowers of language, he seizes on the mind, which like the unfortunate bird under the influence of fascination becomes passive and obedient to the power it neither can nor wishes to resist. In the "tempest and whirlwind" of his eloquence, his argumentation is so rapid his thoughts are so novel, and his conclusions so unexpected, yet correct, that you can neither anticipate nor think—the attention is riveted, and the mind occupied alone with the subject which he is handling, and it is not until the fascination of his manner has subsided that you feel inclined to reason or become capable of detecting his errors—even then his witchery lingers on the imagination, and casts a veil over the judgment which it cannot remove, and which, in opposition to the strongest efforts obscures its perceptions and weakens its energies. I have heard gentlemen, who were associated with him, declare, that when he spoke, they were for some time after he had closed, unable to remove the

spell by which they were bound, and that, by condensing almost to obscurity, they could not answer the whole of his numerous arguments and ingenious deductions, without occupying too much of the time of the house. And yet, what is very singular, he has never been known to attempt but one rhetorical flourish, and in that he unfortunately failed. His oratorical style has none of the embellishments of art, or the witcheries of fancy, but is almost to dryness, plain, undorned and concise. With all the excellencies I have mentioned, however, Mr. Calhoun has some great faults—"il n. appartient," says the duke de la Rochefoucault, "qu'aux grands hommes d'avoir de grands défauts." He wants consistency and perseverance of mind, and is incapable of long continued and patient investigation—what he does not see at the first examination, he takes no pains to search for; but still the lightning glance of his mind seldom fails to furnish him with all that may be necessary for his immediate purposes. In his legislative career, which though short, was uncommonly luminous; he sometimes advocated a measure which he afterwards abandoned, and often opposed a question which he afterwards supported. His decisions were in many cases, marked with a precipitation and haste, inconsistent with the character of an able statesman, and though he sometimes could satisfy his coadjutors, he but seldom was so successful as to satisfy himself—His love of novelty, and his solicitude to astonish were so great, that he has often been known to go beyond even the wildest dreams of acknowledged political visionaries, and to propose schemes that were wholly impracticable, and that he seemed to offer merely for the purpose of displaying the exuberance of his mind, and the extent of his ingenuity. Youth, and the necessary want of experience, may be pled as an apology for his eccentricities of intellect, his apparent aberrations, and his occasional perversion of talent. The wisdom of age, and a more correct and extensive acquaintance with men and things, will doubtless allay the order of his mind, and lessen the impetuosity of his passions. Like our eccentric countryman, Darwin, he is capable of broaching new theories, but wants the perseverance, depth of thought, and patience of judgment, necessary to bring them to maturity, or to render them useful. Such men are often both very serviceable and very injurious to society. In such a body as the congress of the United States, where the concentrated wisdom of the nation is assembled, such a man's sphere of usefulness cannot be ascertained or defined. Amidst the variety of schemes, his ingenuity suggests, and his ambition urges him so propose, many will no doubt be found to be practicable; and though he cannot

himself mature them, the mass of mind by which he is surrounded, and on which he blazes, will reduce them to shape, and give to his "airy nothings a local habitation and a name." In short, Mr. Calhoun is one of those beings whom you can only trace like the comet by the light, which he casts upon his path. But the situation to which he has recently been elevated, has, I fear, abridged his sphere of usefulness, and as Secretary of War, Mr. Calhoun, who occupied every tongue during the sessions of the national legislature, may dwindle into obscurity, but will never be forgotten.

(To be continued.)

OUR RELATIONS WITH SPAIN.

We now commence the publication of the documents communicated by the President to Congress on the 14th inst. and shall continue them until finished. We forbear to offer, at present, any remarks upon them. We doubt not they will be read with interest and attention. The message of the President which accompanied this correspondence, and Mr. Adams's letter of the 14th inst. was inserted in our last number, page 186.

[No. 1.] (Translation.)

Don Luis de Onís to the Secretary of State.

SIR—I am under the necessity of calling your attention, and that of the President, to what has occurred at Baltimore, in relation to the two privateers or pirates, which have lately entered the bay of the Chesapeake, and are now within the proper limits of the state of Maryland; the one commanded by captain Taylor, and the other by captain Stafford. It is notorious, that these privateers, manned and armed in the ports of the Union, sailed on a cruise against the Spanish commerce, and have returned to the waters of Maryland with a part of the plunder and booty, they have taken on board of Spanish and Portuguese vessels.

For the due conviction of this outrage, the necessary orders or warrants were sent, at the request of the consul of his catholic majesty in Baltimore, to the marshal of that city, to proceed to the arrest of the aforesaid privateers, and for its execution a gun boat was granted by the collector of the customs. All this, however, was in vain; the martial gave no effect to the orders issued for this arrest, and his majesty's consul seeing that eight days had passed, without the marshal taking a single step to fulfil the orders he was charged with, called upon him, and claimed their execution—upon which he replied categorically, "that he was unwilling to proceed to the arrest of the said privateers, because it was not his duty to execute it, except they had entered the port of Baltimore—but by no means in the bay although within the district of the state." The consul lately applied to the district attorney, complaining of this conduct; and he acknowledged, that indeed it was very extraordinary; but he took no steps to remedy it, or to enforce the observance of the laws of the United States, in a case of so scandalous an example. These facts speak for themselves, and the mere statement of

them is sufficient to make you and the President thoroughly sensible of the monstrous consequences, which the irregular conduct of this marshal may lead to. It is perfectly evident, that the public treaty between Spain and the United States and the late act of congress, sanctioned as a general law for the more strict observance of the neutrality of the same states with foreign powers, are scandalously trampled under foot in Maryland; and that the marshal, by formally disobeying the lawful authority of the state, and that of the general government of the Union, protected the hostilities and piracies, carried on against the trade of a nation, in a state of peace and amity with the United States. I cannot, therefore, do less than to remonstrate in the name of the king, my master, against so manifest a violation of the neutrality of this republic, of its laws, and of the treaty existing between the two powers, and to request that you will be pleased to obtain of the President, the most prompt and effectual orders to cause the marshal of Baltimore to do his duty, and all requisite justice to the subjects of his majesty.

It is my duty also to call your attention and that of the President, to the conduct of the adventurer, sir Gregor McGregor, who since he was in arms with the bands of insurgents in the province of Venezuela, has come to these states, and been constantly engaged in enterprizes to invade or disturb the tranquility of his catholic majesty's possessions in that part of the world. He lately recruited in Charleston a great number of adventurers, and among them several persons of note viz: one Rouse, son of a colonel of that name, an inhabitant of that city, one Champion, who was a commissary in the service of the U. States in the late war, and store-keeper of ordnance and one Heath, a lawyer of the same place; and many others whose names I pass over. He purchased, under a borrowed name, a brig of considerable burden, which he despatched with passengers to N. Orleans, on the 19th of last month; and on the following day he went on to Savannah in the stage, according to common report, to recruit more people. His subsequent proceedings and hostile preparations in the bosom of this union, against the possessions of the Spanish monarchy, are notorious, and announced with a scandalous publicity in many papers of these states. I hope, then, that you and the President will apply the energy of your zeal, for good order and the observance of the public laws, by restraining these excesses and vexations, which compromise the neutrality, which the President has proposed to preserve in the dispute subsisting between the king, my master, and some of his provinces in rebellion, and render null, as you may imagine, the security in which the government of his catholic majesty rests, in a reliance on the safeguard of the said laws, and on that of the general principles of public good faith, which serve as the basis of the tranquility and friendly intercourse between the nations and governments of the world.

(Signed) LUIS DE ONIS.

Philadelphia, 9th July, 1817.

[No. 2.] (Translation.)

The same to the same.

SIR—The message of the President embraces two particular points, in the paragraph in which he announces the actual state of the political relations between Spain and the United States, of which I wish to have a precise and exact knowledge, to reconcile their true meaning with the

sincerity and purity of the sentiments, of which the American government makes profession, in conformity with those which animate his catholic majesty, when he anxiously seeks all possible means of settling the differences pending between the two nations, and of strengthening his friendship and good understanding with the U. States, on a basis, which being confirmed by the most generous principles of good faith and mutual justice, may be lasting and unalterable, without leaving the seeds of discontent, or ground for fresh differences in future.

The two points I speak of, are, 1st, what relates to Amelia Island, and 2d, what concerns Galveston.

The President announces, in respect to the first, that this island having been taken possession of by a party of people, who belong to no country, or if they have belonged to any, they have, by their conduct forfeited all right of public consideration or toleration, they having established in the said island, a place of refuge, scandalous by its piracies, and seriously prejudicial, by a contraband trade, to the United States, chiefly in what regards the clandestine introduction of negroes into the territories of the Union, and the carrying off or flight of others from the same country, his excellency has therefore determined to put a stop to this evil, and had given orders accordingly.

It is my duty to remind you, sir, that the expedition which took possession of Amelia Island, was formed and armed at Charleston and Savannah, under the command of the adventurer, sir Gregor McGregor, and wholly composed of citizens of this republic, in violation of the laws of the United States, the law of nations, and the existing treaty between Spain and the said States. I denounced this expedition to you at the time and invoked the efficacious authority of the federal government, to prevent it, and punish the offenders. The expedition proceeded, notwithstanding, from the limits and ports of the Union, to invade that island, and there commit the excesses on which the president touches. After MacGregor had left Amelia Island, the district court of South Carolina issued a bench writ to apprehend him, wherever he might be found within the American territories. This writ could not certainly have been issued, without a legal evidence of the offence, nor could the offence be more enormous or notorious, in the face of the whole Union.—It results from this, that there could be no just ground of converting into an act of hostility or of public detriment to Spain, the evils which have flowed from the toleration of similar armaments in the bosom of this Union—armaments which had for their object, the invasion and plunder of the possessions of a friendly power.

I, therefore, request you, sir, to be pleased to inform me of the measures the President may have taken on this point, and of his intentions in relation to it, in order that by informing the authorities of the king, in East Florida, thereof, those discontents may be avoided to which an erroneous conception may give rise, and all unfortunate impressions dissipated, which might disturb the lively and sincere desire of conciliation and perfect harmony which actuates his catholic majesty.

On the second point, relating to Galveston, the President announces, that, in that place, which

is contended falls within the limits of the United States in consequence of the acquisition of Louisiana, a number of vagrant persons had before established themselves, and committed acts of piracy very prejudicial to the trade of the U. S. and that, therefore, his excellency had also taken measures to correct those abuses.

There are two things which I have to remark on this point. The first is, that the place of Galveston has not been, nor ever could be, within the limits of Louisiana—because, at no time did it make part of it. It has constantly belonged to the dominions of the crown of Spain, as a territory absolutely unconnected with, and distinct from Louisiana; and as such, ought to be maintained and respected, until the United States produce documents which establish their rights, and annul the titles, till now undisputed, of property and possession on the part of Spain, from the earliest times of its discovery and conquest, unto the present; and this will be determined, as there may be occasion for it, and may be just, at the time of amicably arranging the question of boundaries between the two nations, as his catholic majesty sincerely and earnestly desires, and as I have the hope to verify in a short time, in his royal name, by means of the negotiation which we have established.

The second thing which I have to recal to you, is, that the king's troops drove off from Matagorda the vagabond freebooters, who had taken possession of that point; in consequence of which the same adventurers were forced to evacuate Galveston, where they had also established themselves, so that neither of these places was afterwards attacked or infested by them or any other banditti. Moreover, if by the occupation of Galveston at that time, the United States have sustained injuries, it is notorious, that Spain has suffered much greater, by the facility afforded to the pirates in capturing Spanish vessels, carrying them into that place, and there selling them to the citizens of this Union; that from this magazine of plunder, they conveyed the Spanish property to New-Orleans and other parts of the United States in American vessels, as is well known to you, sir, and to all the world. In any event, when the injuries reciprocally caused to American citizens, by the government or the subjects of Spain, or to the latter, by the government or citizens of the United States, are compared or estimated, such an indemnification will be stipulated, as is agreeable to justice and good faith.

These remarks, and others equally obvious, cannot fail to convince you, as I am sure they will convince the whole world, that there was not the smallest motive for proceeding to acts of violence, on either of the two points, which form the subject of this note, and on which the President has touched in his message. I hope that the intentions of his excellency will not differ from this opinion; and, as well to avoid the disagreeable consequences which might arise from a misunderstanding, as to communicate to the king, my master, the true state of things, I have to request of you, sir, as I now do, a precise and satisfactory explanation on the abovementioned two points, namely, of the measures taken by the President in relation to them, and of his intentions upon the subject. I flatter myself, that you will have the goodness to give me the said explanation as speedily as the case requires; and in the mean time,

allow me to renew the assurances of my high consideration and respect,

(Signed) LUIS DE ONIS.

Mr. John Quincy Adams, &c. &c. &c.

Washington, 6th December, 1817.

[No. 3.] (Translation.)

The same to the same.

Sir—Although I have just arrived at the federal city, as you know, I would not have lost an instant, after assembling the principal papers and documents, relating to the differences pending between his catholic majesty's government, and that of the United States, in resuming and continuing with you, to a definite conclusion, the negotiation, which, by fortuitous causes, was suspended in the beginning of the present year, if I had not hoped to give you time for being so far disengaged, as to be able to devote to these important concerns, all the attention they require. But I ought no longer to defer on my part, the necessary steps to open communications of such high interest, and consequently to proceed with you to the settlement and amicable arrangement of all the points in dispute between the two governments.

You will doubtless have been convinced of the impossibility in which I was placed, of commencing this negotiation last winter, by reason of my not being furnished with instructions suitable to the new character which ulterior circumstances had given to it, and my not having then received from my government such as extended to this case. I despatched the secretary of this legation to Madrid to lay this deficiency before my sovereign, and the difficulty under which it placed me, of entering into a negotiation which might effectually restore the most perfect harmony between the two powers, by putting an end to all disputes by means of a solemn transaction, which being founded on the principles of mutual justice, and combined in good faith with those of reciprocal utility and convenience, might be completely satisfactory to both governments and both nations. His majesty is filled with the greatest concern, on seeing that by this unexpected accident, the negotiation was delayed, notwithstanding his most sincere and decided wishes to conclude it, and strengthen his friendship and good understanding with the United States, as he had manifested from the moment of his restoration to the throne, gave immediate orders, that the necessary instructions should be communicated to me, for the execution of this sovereign trust in its fullest extent—and to omit no means, on his part, which might accelerate the desired epocha of this arrangement and definite transaction; he, at the same time, caused to be proposed, by his principal secretary of state, to the minister of the U. States at Madrid, a project for the said transaction—but it not having been admitted by that minister, who said that he was not authorized to resume and terminate in Spain, the negotiation already transferred to Washington, and committed to me; the aforesaid secretary of legation returned without loss of time, and brought me the suitable instructions, accompanied with the positive orders of his majesty, that I should omit no means, as far as they might be compatible with justice, and the honor of his august character, to settle and terminate amicably all pending differences, and generously to satisfy the United States, in every thing which might depend on the free will of his majesty.

Such are the dispositions of the king, my master, and such the orders which he has communicated to me, anxious as he is, to adjust all differences with the United States, and give them solemn proofs of his high esteem and sincere friendship.

I am ready therefore to resume the negotiation, and to pursue it with you, in all the points embraced by it, until its final termination: and I shall be very happy, if doing so, I can satisfy all the desires and just hopes of the United States.

In consequence, I request, sir, that you would be pleased to inform me, when you are ready to enter into this important negotiation, and when it will be agreeable to you, that we commence the preliminary conferences; or in case that you should consider them unnecessary, that we discuss the means of agreeing on, and fixing the most simple, expeditious and suitable mode of proceeding, with all possible despatch, to the settlement and final adjustment of all the points in dispute.

I await your answer to this note, animated by the most lively desire and the most flattering hopes, of terminating all disagreements and contents between two nations, which by their mutual interests and the generosity of their sentiments, have always lived in perfect union and friendship, and ought to cement them more and more for their common happiness.

In the mean while, I renew to you my respects, and pray God to preserve you many years.

(Signed) LUIS DE ONIS.

Washington, 10th December, 1817.

[No. 4.]

The Secretary of State to Don Luis de Onis

Sir—I have had the honor of receiving your letter of the tenth instant, and shall be happy to receive you at the office of this Department the day after to-morrow at one o'clock, to confer with you on the subject of it. I am instructed by the President, on this occasion, to assure you of the satisfaction with which he has learned, that you are furnished with instructions from your government adequate to the adjustment of all the differences between the two countries, and of the earnestness of his desire that the negotiation may terminate in an arrangement mutually satisfactory to both parties.

(Signed) JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

[No. 5.] (Translation.)

Don Luis de Onis to the Secretary of State.

Sir—After I had informed you in my note of the 10th of this month, and confirmed the same in our conference on the 19th, of the frank and friendly dispositions of his catholic majesty's government towards that of the United States, of his sincere desire to settle and terminate the differences pending between the two governments, in a manner just and satisfactory to both, and the positive orders I had received, with suitable instructions to that effect; I also acquainted you, that the king, my master, being disposed to oblige the United States in whatever might be compatible with the rights and honor of the monarchy, and the dignity becoming his august character, would condescend to cede the two Floridas to this republic, in consideration of an exchange or equivalent which might be useful or convenient to Spain. But as this exchange or equivalent must consist of a territory belonging to the United States,

ed States, and which may offer invariable points, marked by nature, to fix the divisional line between the possessions of the Union and those of the crown of Spain, in a manner never to admit of doubt or controversy hereafter, his catholic majesty caused certain proposals for the said exchange or equivalent, to be made, through his principal secretary of state, to the minister of the United States at Madrid. They were decidedly declined by him, on the ground of their being inadmissible; and I was informed by you that they are so considered by your government, and that consequently it is necessary to have recourse to others, which may be admissible in the existing state of things.

Although the proposals made by his majesty's principal secretary of state, to the minister of the United States at Madrid, were neither absolute nor invariable, it is easy to perceive that they are founded on the perfect conviction of his majesty as to the irrefragable and notorious rights by virtue of which the crown of Spain has possessed both Floridas since she acquired them of England, and also the provinces and districts of country possessed by her to the westward of Louisiana, and which have ever been independent of, or absolutely unconnected with, and separate from, that province, without having ever passed, since their discovery, conquest and possession, under a foreign dominion. But, as the United States, since their acquisition of Louisiana, conceive they have a right to a greater extent of territory both to the eastward and westward thereof, by setting on foot a dispute respecting the boundaries which separate them from the Spanish possessions, and pretending that they ought to include part of those possessions, it is not strange that the exchange or equivalent proposed for the Floridas, did appear inadmissible. It has therefore become indispensably necessary to free this question of boundaries from all obscurity, and to adjust and establish the true points which divide, or ought to divide, the Spanish territories from those of this republic. Unless this inquiry and deliberation be previously made, it is absolutely impossible to point out or judge of a just equivalent, which would be admissible and satisfactory to the two contracting parties, inasmuch as the requisite basis of a cession and its equivalent, is wanting; this basis, as is obvious, must be laid in the valuation of the territory specified in the contract, which valuation must be preceded by establishing the territory belonging to Spain, and also that belonging to the United States.

You cannot, therefore, but agree with me, sir, that it is absolutely necessary we should first settle the principal points relative to the question of boundaries, before we proceed to form and offer proposals for the cession of the Floridas, and for an equivalent to their value or estimation, or for the general and definite settlement of all pending differences. Although this matter has already been the subject of negotiation at Aranjuez, it cannot be said, that the discussion should be considered as terminated or exhausted, or that the American government, having then stated its positions and opinions on the subject, it will not depart from them, although the opinions his catholic majesty sustains, be different. It is unquestionable, that in the discussion entered into at Aranjuez, and early interrupted, not a single point or ground was touched on, on the part of the United States, that could serve as a support

to their pretensions: and on the part of Spain there was produced titles, dates, documents and arguments, incontestably proving, by abundant and irresistible evidence, the rights of the monarchy to the territory in question: rights founded on property and immemorial possession, acknowledged by different powers, and never disputed by any. This affair is consequently not confined to points of opinion, on which each party may respectively maintain that which is best suited to them; it is reduced to unalterable truths, and positive and certain facts. I assure you, sir, in the name of my government, and the king, my master, solemnly promises it on the inviolability of his royal word, that the moment it shall be shown and proved, that any of the territories now in dispute, do not belong to the crown of Spain, and on the contrary, that they do belong to the United States, his majesty will, with the greatest pleasure, surrender to the disposal of the United States, such territory or territories as it shall be made to appear do not belong to the Spanish monarchy, and will, in good faith, acknowledge the right of the United States to the same. His majesty wishes for nothing that is not his own, or to which his crown has not a lawful right. I cannot but believe that the views of your government agree with those I have just stated, & that consequently we ought to lose no time, in immediately resuming the discussion commenced at Aranjuez, as to what relates to its principal points, and, by impartially examining the grounds established by both governments, and the arguments and proofs which they both have to produce anew, in support of their rights or pretensions, acknowledge frankly and with good faith, what belongs lawfully to Spain, and what belongs lawfully to the United States. Guided by the certain principles of reason and mutual justice, it will be easy for us, by means of this investigation, to form a settled opinion, and come to a just result as to the boundaries which do or ought to separate Louisiana from the Spanish possessions, and thus terminate this dispute. That, which is connected with the question of losses and injuries, is still more easy and simple to arrange, as you admitted, when we conversed on that point in our late conference; and it will therefore prove no obstacle to our agreeing on the cession desired by the United States, and proceeding to it by means of a final settlement of all pending differences, which may at the same time embrace whatever may be stipulated by this particular agreement.

You may perceive, sir, that the mode I propose, is the most simple, just and proper for accomplishing the negotiation to be entered upon, and is that which was adopted by Mr. Erving, the minister of the United States, in his note of the 26th of August, 1816, in which he informed his majesty's government, that he was ready to enter into a full and frank discussion of all the points in dispute, and pledged himself thereto.—As nothing further has been done on the part of Spain, than to transfer the negotiation to Washington, the same reasons subsist which then dictated the incontestable propriety and necessity of resuming the discussion; reasons, of which you are doubtless fully convinced, as they are not to be combated by any explanations, when examined with good faith, because they are self-evident and identified with the soundest principles of justice.

As in consideration of these reasons and prin-

ciples, I hope you will have no objection to agree to—a succinct examination of the question of boundaries, and to a rational and fair inquiry into the titles and grounds on which each government rests its rights and pretensions. The natural order seems to require that we should begin this examination and inquiry with what relates to the eastern boundaries of Louisiana; that, after establishing them as they ought to be, we may proceed to examine and establish, in like manner, those which regard the western; it being, nevertheless, well understood, that neither by this act, nor any one whatever of those which contribute to produce the present negotiation, it shall be inferred, that his catholic majesty renounces in any manner, the right he has, or may have, to reclaim against the non-fulfilment of the treaty of St. Ildephonso, concluded between Spain and France in the year in 1800, and against the solemn stipulations contained in the additional articles of the same treaty, forming an essential part of the contract between the two nations.

The boundaries of Louisiana, on that side, join those of West Florida, and are so precisely established and fixed by public treaties, that I do not think your government can still persist in the opinion that Louisiana ought to be extended, by this Spanish province, to the river Perdido. If, however, the imagination, resorting to specious subtleties and abstractions, carries us back to the period when France formed settlements on the left of the Mississippi, and possessed what are now two distinct provinces, namely Louisiana and West Florida, still the certain and incontestable fact will follow, that Spain acquired neither of the Floridas from France. That power, while in possession of those territories, as she was until 1763, might name them and point out their respective limits as she thought fit. That is quite unimportant to the present question. It is certain, that by the treaty of 1763, France ceded to England all the territory possessed by her to the eastward of the Mississippi, with the exception of the island of Orleans; and it is also certain, that England united, as her own, from that year, the same territory to Florida, which, by the same treaty, Spain had ceded to her; and that, having added thereto the district and port of Pensacola, she called it West Florida, by which name, and no other, it has ever since been known. In the war 1779, Spain conquered the said territory of West Florida from England; and this right of conquest was afterwards secured by a solemn treaty, between England and Spain, in September 1783. It is by this title that West Florida belongs, until the present day, to Spain, in addition to East Florida, which was also ceded by the said treaty. It is evident then, that Spain neither acquired or received from France either of the Floridas, but that she acquired them both of England, in 1783, classed as two distinct provinces, and universally known by the names of East and West Florida. She has, from that period, possessed them separate and distinct, without having ever confounded either of them with Louisiana, either in whole or in part. They are laid down distinct and separate, in the maps, charts, and geographies of all nations, from the year 1763, to the present day. In all the public acts and instruments which speak of them, they appear distinct and separate, as they do in the different treaties in which they are mentioned.

This being the case, how can your government

still maintain its opinion? The United States acquired Louisiana from France; such as she had acquired it from Spain by the treaty of St. Ildephonso. In this treaty nothing is stipulated but the re-cession of Louisiana; nor is there a single word in the whole treaty that bears the most distant allusion to West Florida, which is the object to which the dispute is reduced in that quarter. The clauses of the treaty are clear, precise, and conclusive; they fix the sense of the stipulation invariably, and leave no room for vague or specious constructions. The very title given to that treaty by the contracting parties, at once pointed out the territory restored by Spain to France, in exchange for the kingdom of Etruria. The title says, "Retrocession of Louisiana;" and the word "retrocession" has not, nor ever had, any other signification, in the Spanish or French language, than the act of restoring to an individual, or a nation, that which had before been received from him, or from it; so that a different signification cannot be given to this word (adopted by the contracting parties to express the nature of their stipulation) without changing the proper and genuine acceptation, in both languages, of the definite term they have respectively employed, and without substantially changing the intentions which serve as the basis of the contract.

The three clauses by which they afterwards go on to fulfil this convention, agree perfectly with the said title, and by supporting and explaining each other, they fix it in a clear and precise manner. The first clause says—"That his catholic majesty restores Louisiana to France, with the same extent it had when possessed by Spain." It is well known that no part of the Floridas, or other Spanish possessions, was then included in Louisiana, or annexed to it. At that time Louisiana was, in the hands of Spain, precisely what it was when ceded by France, in virtue of the treaty of 1764. In the same treaty its eastern boundaries are marked by a line running eastward from Manchac point, thence following the course of the river Iberville, and dividing the lakes Borgne, Pontchartrain, and Maurepas, and finally terminating at the Gulf of Mexico, without leaving the smallest doubt as to the true points of the frontier. This is the territory which Spain retro-ceded to France, because it is the only one which she possessed under the name of Louisiana. The second clause agrees with the first, and opportunely declares and fixes its import. It says, "and with the same extent it had when possessed by France," expressions which necessarily refer to the period of time which intervened between the cession, by France to England, of the territory possessed by her on the left bank of the Mississippi, and the cession made by the same power to Spain, of Louisiana. As the first of these two cessions took place in the year 1763, and the second in 1764, it is evident, that during that interval, France possessed Louisiana in the manner stated; and with the same extent did she cede it to Spain, nor could she cede it with more, as she then possessed nothing more in that part of the American continent.

If a different meaning be given to this clause, by supposing that the contracting parties allude in it to a former period, when France possessed Louisiana jointly with the territory ceded by her to England in 1763, it would place this clause in absolute contradiction with the title, and with the first clause of the treaty of Retrocession, because,

Louisiana not having, prior to the year 1763, while in the hands of France, the same extent it had when in the hands of Spain at the time of the treaty of 1800, nor the same that it had when ceded by France to Spain, in 1764, it follows, that the second clause would be absurd and unmeaning, if it alluded to a period of time anterior to 1763. It would be absurd and unmeaning, because, having no other object than to explain and determine more circumstantially the first clause, which is the fundamental one of the treaty, and that which governs the other, it would express a thing which could in no wise agree with the stipulations contained in it; since, by giving greater force to the import of the second clause, that which is considered the fundamental basis of the first, would be rendered false and erroneous.—It would be absolutely contradictory to the express object and intent of the treaty since Spain not having received Louisiana from France with the extent in which she possessed it prior to the year 1763, but with that which it had when it was ceded in 1764, the retro-cession, which as I have just said, is the express object and intent of the treaty, could not take place. Spain could only cede back to France what she had received from her; nor could she, moreover, add to the retro-cession any other particular territory of her dominions, without expressing or mentioning it.—Louisiana was ceded back to France, such as it was received from her, and as she possessed it in 1800, and had possessed it since she had acquired it. In fact, if Louisiana, while in the hands of Spain, included no part of West Florida, and if Spain had received no part thereof or of the other Florida, from France, how could she cede it back to France, or cede it without naming it, or saying a single word which could allude to this idea?—Let us therefore agree, that it is impossible to give an arbitrary construction to the second clause of the treaty of St. Ildefonso, or any other than that which it has and ought to have, in connexion with the first clause, and with the title and the express object of that instrument. You cannot but be fully convinced, sir, of this truth; and on proceeding to the examination of the third clause, you will find what I have just stated still more comprehensively and clearly demonstrated. This clause says, "and as it ought to be after the treaties concluded between Spain and other powers." The only treaties to which this clause could refer, were the following:

1. That of 1764, by which France ceded Louisiana to Spain. In this treaty the eastern boundaries of Louisiana are marked by the course of the Mississippi, and next by the river Iberville, the lakes Borgne, Ponchartrain, and Maurepas.—I was consequently proper here to recal what was set forth in this treaty. 2. That of 1783, between Spain and England, by which the latter confirmed to Spain, the possession and property of West Florida, which she had conquered during the war, and ceded to her East Florida. It is a very fit moment to recal the inviolability of this treaty, since it is evident from it, that the Floridas are two provinces independent of Louisiana, absolutely unconnected with, and distinct from it; and that they came into the possession of Spain by very different titles, in consideration of which, one thing cannot be confounded with another.—And the 3d is that of 1795, concluded between Spain and the U. States. As in this treaty the frontiers between the U. S. and the Spanish possessions

are described, and the Floridas are named as provinces notoriously unconnected with and distinct from Louisiana; as by it the dismemberment of Natchez, Nogales, &c. was effected, and as it is therein stipulated, that the navigation of the Mississippi shall be free to the Americans and the Spaniards; and a place granted in favor of the former for their commodities on the banks of the Mississippi, for which purpose New Orleans was designated for the term of three years; it was consequently thought proper to refer to this treaty, and show that it, as well as those of 1764 and 1783, is, and ought to be, in full force and effect.

You will perceive, sir, that the three clauses stipulating the retro-cession of Louisiana to France, cannot be more conclusive; that they are properly connected with and support each other, by declaring and explaining the intentions of the contracting parties, and the precise nature and extent of their contract; so that it is impossible to give another interpretation to any of the said clauses, as that would place them in contradiction with each other; and would, moreover, obscure the evident truth of facts, and involve a monstrous violation of public treaties, without excepting that of 1778, between France and the United States.—You doubtless bear in mind, sir, that by the 6th article of that treaty, France solemnly engages never to acquire West Florida, or any portion of the territory ceded by her to England, in 1763.—How then could she, in 1800, acquire West Florida or any part of it, even although the treaty of St. Ildefonso were not specifically and solely confined to the retro-cession of Louisiana, such as it was at that time, and as it had been since 1764? The understanding rejects all doubt on points so clear and evident. By the treaty of St. Ildefonso, France herself only received Louisiana, such as it was in the hands of Spain, and as it was after its cession by France; it is well known that it is the act of delivery which completes the contract. France was satisfied with what was delivered to her, and neither claimed nor pretended to any thing more. Would the French government, under Napoleon, have failed to claim this additional territory, if, in that treaty, there had been found a single word of which it could avail itself, or the smallest pretext for making the claim? Certainly not, France knew perfectly well that Louisiana did not comprehend a greater extent of territory, and that all was delivered that belonged to her at the time the contract was made.

The French government itself, after the dispute arose between the United States and Spain, which is now pending, declared in two official notes, "that the eastern boundaries of Louisiana are pointed out by the course of the Mississippi, and by the river Iberville, and the lakes Ponchartrain and Maurepas; that Spain has ceded back nothing more to France, nor had the latter a right to pretend to more; and, that having substituted the United States in her rights, they could pretend to nothing more in virtue of the cession or sale made to them of Louisiana.

"The 12th of Fructidor, 12th year."

"The eastern boundaries of Louisiana are pointed out by the course of the Mississippi, and afterwards by the river Iberville, the lakes Ponchartrain and Maurepas. This is the line of demarcation which bounds the territory ceded by Spain to France, by the treaty of the 30th of Ventose, 9th year. Nothing beyond this limit

would have been asked for by France, and as she did nothing more than substitute the U. States in the rights which she had acquired, they cannot require of Spain a more extensive cession, unless such cession be negotiated and stipulated between them and Spain, by some further convention."

"The 3th of Germinal, 13th year."

"This question could not become the subject of a serious discussion between Spain and the United States, except the conditions of the treaties of cession, which have successively transferred Louisiana to France and the Americans, were lost sight of."

"Spain could only cede back to France the territory she had received from her; the rights of France were afterwards transferred to the United States, and they were so only to the same extent."

If, notwithstanding this full and irresistible demonstration, you should be of opinion, sir, that it is still necessary to clear up this point, let us have recourse to France, that she may afford all the explanations that are judged to be necessary or useful, since nothing is more proper than that she and Spain should know to what the treaty concluded at St. Ildephonso is reduced, and they alone are competent to clear up any doubts that may have arisen as to the import of the expressions employed in the said treaty. It is unquestionable that it agrees with the principle generally acknowledged, that when a law or treaty offers any doubt, from the obscurity or ambiguity of the words contained in it, the party which made the law or the treaty, is the one which should explain the meaning of such words, and remove the doubt which has occurred.

I would now proceed to declare what are, or ought to be, the western boundaries of Louisiana, and what are those which separate, or ought to separate it from the Spanish possessions, should I not apprehend to make this note too diffuse.—Reserving myself, therefore, to discuss this point in a separate note, I now recede to your consideration the chief grounds and arguments on which Spain founds her exclusive right to the whole extent of West Florida, in order that when we are agreed upon this point, we may proceed to a like examination and deliberation on the western boundaries of Louisiana.

But although this is the order pointed out by reason and justice in the actual state of the pending differences, nevertheless, that we may judge upon the most exact information of the grounds and arguments of each government respectively, and after agreeing on what belongs to Spain and what belongs to the United States, we may be enabled to lay the basis of a general and final settlement of all differences; if you should think there can be a more expeditious mode of settling and terminating them, without prejudicing the inviolable rights of the crown of Spain, and on principles of reciprocal utility and convenience, you may communicate your ideas thereon to me, with the certainty that it is the earnest wish of his catholic majesty that this negotiation may be amicably terminated, for which purpose he has given me decisive orders and instructions; and I again assure you, sir, that I shall think myself very happy, if in this negotiation I can satisfy all the just desires and hopes of the United States, for which I shall omit nothing that is in my pow-

er, or may be compatible with the rights and honor of his majesty's crown.

I renew to you, sir, the assurances of my respects, and I pray God to preserve you many years.

(Signed)

LUIS DE ONIS.

Washington, 29th December, 1817.

(Documents to be continued.)

NATIONAL LEGISLATURE.

FIRST SESSION—FIFTEENTH CONGRESS.

SENATE.

Wednesday, March 18.

Arsenal Ports.

The following resolution moved yesterday, by Mr. King was taken up this day, read, amended and agreed to as follows.

Resolved, That the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, requested to cause to be resumed and completed, a survey of the harbors of Portsmouth, Boston, Newport, New London, New York, with the two entrances thereof, of the waters of the lower Chesapeake bay, and of York river, for the purpose that two suitable stations may be selected for the establishment of arsenal ports; that in connexion with, and aid of, the naval officers to be employed in this service, officers and the corps of engineers be joined, with instructions to survey the harbors and waters aforesaid, and the islands and shores in and about the same, and to report sketches of the works necessary for the protection of the several places so surveyed, with estimates of the expense of their construction, and of the force requisite to defend the same.

That these surveys and reports be laid before the Senate during the first week of the next session of Congress, with a designation of the two stations, which in the separate or joint opinion of the persons to be employed as aforesaid, are the most fit for the establishment of the two arsenal ports aforesaid.

The bill from the House of Representatives for altering the time of holding the District Court for the District of Virginia, was read a third time and passed.

The bill to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to repay or remit certain Alien duties therein described; the bill to adjust the claims to lots in the town of Vincennes, and for the sale of the land appropriated as a common for the use of the inhabitants of said town; the bill to defray the expenses of the Militia when marching to places of rendezvous; the bill respecting the surveying and sale of the public lands in the Alabama territory; were severally read a third time, passed and sent to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

Thursday, March 19.

The report of the committee of naval affairs on the memorial of certain officers of the navy and of the marine corps attached to the Mediterranean squadron, was taken up, and postponed to the first Monday in April next.

On motion of Mr. Lippes, it was

Resolved, That the President of the United States be requested to cause to be laid before the Senate an estimate of the sum necessary for the establishment of two docks for the purpose of repairing vessels of the largest size.

On motion of Mr. *Ruggles*, it was
Resolved, That the committee on public lands be instructed to inquire into the expediency of extending the jurisdiction and laws of the Territory of Michigan to the Eastern Boundary of the Illinois Territory.

The Senate then resumed the consideration of the bill to adjust the claims to land, and establishing land offices in the Districts east of the Island of New Orleans. In maturing the details of this bill, and discussing propositions to amend it, the Senate occupied the remainder of the sitting.

Friday, March 20.

Mr. *Crittenden*, from the committee on the judiciary, reported a bill prescribing the manner of deciding controversies between two or more states.

Reduction of the staff of the Army.

Mr. *Williams*, of Tenn. from the committee on military affairs, reported the bill to reduce the staff of the army, with an amendment, proposing the following additional sections :

Sec. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That after the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and nineteen, the present system of supplying the army with rations be abolished, and that in lieu thereof shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, one commissary general, with the rank, pay, and emoluments of colonel of ordinance, who shall, before entering on the duties of his office, give bond and security, in such sum as the President may direct, and as many assistants to be taken from the subalterns of the line, as the service may require, who shall receive twenty dollars per month, in addition to their pay in the line, and who shall, before entering on the duties of their office, give bond and security, in such sums as the President may direct.

The commissary general and his assistants shall perform such duties, in purchasing and issuing of rations to the army of the United States, as the President may direct.

Sec. 7. *And be it further enacted*, That supplies for the army, unless in particular and urgent cases the Secretary of War should otherwise direct, shall be purchased by contract, to be made by the commissary general, on public notice, to be delivered on inspection, in the bulk, and at such places as shall be stipulated ; which contract shall be made under such regulations as the Secretary of War may direct.

Sec. 8. *And be it further enacted*, That the President may make such alterations in the component parts of the ration as a due regard to the health and comfort of the army, and economy may require.

Sec. 9. *And be it further enacted*, That the commissary general, and his assistants, shall not be concerned, directly or indirectly, in the purchase or sale, in trade or commerce, of any article entering into the composition of the ration allowed to the troops in the service of the United States, except on account of the United States ; nor shall such officer take and apply to his own use any gain or emolument for negotiating or transacting any business connected with the duties of his office, other than what is or may be allowed by law ; and the commissary general, and his assistants, shall be subject to martial law.

Sec. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That all letters to and from the commissary general, which may

relate to his office duties, shall be free from postage.

The President laid before the Senate the general account of the Treasurer of the United States for 1817, and the accounts of the War and Navy Departments, from October, 1816, to October, 1817, together with the reports thereon.

The President communicated by message in writing, information respecting the negotiations last year with the Netherlands, which was read.

Kentucky and Ohio Canal.

On motion of Mr. *Talbot*,

Resolved, That the committee on so much of the President's message as relates to roads, canals, and seminaries of learning, be instructed to inquire into the propriety and expediency of providing by law for the subscription, on the part of the United States, for certain shares in the Kentucky and Ohio Canal Company, reserved for the United States by the act of incorporation of the said company, passed at the last session of the Kentucky Legislature.

Mr. *Campbell*, from the committee on finance, reported the bill to authorize the State of Tennessee to issue grants and perfect titles to certain entries and locations of lands, with some amendments ; which were read.

The committee appointed on the 4th inst. to inquire into the expediency of adopting measures for the extinguishment of Indian titles to certain lands, were discharged from a further consideration of the subject, adjourned to Monday.

Monday, March 23.

A bill was reported for the relief of President, Directors and Company of the Merchant's Bank of Newport, Rhode-Island ; which bill was read and passed to a second reading.

A report was also made, declaring it inexpedient to extend the provisions of the law, prescribing the mode in which the public acts, records, &c. in each state shall be authenticated to give them effect in another state, to the public acts, records, &c. of the territories of the United States.

The President communicated the memorial of the Legislature of Alabama territory, praying to be invested with power to incorporate companies to construct turnpike roads, &c. which was read and referred.

The bill to alter the time of holding a session of the district court of the District of Maine, was considered and ordered to a third reading.

The bill regulating the pay and emoluments of brevet officers ; and the resolution authorizing a subscription for 1300 copies of the 11th volume of (Wait's) state papers, were severally read the third time and passed.

The bill respecting Naval Depots &c. was postponed to Wednesday.

Land claims east of New Orleans.

The bill for adjusting claims to land and establishing land offices in the districts east of the Island of New Orleans, was resumed, and, after being further amended, was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time.

After the transaction of some other business, the senate adjourned.

Tuesday, March 24.

Mr. *Dickinson* reported a resolution directing medals to be struck, and, together with the thanks of congress, presented to major Gen. Harrison and Gov. Shelby.

Case of R. W. Meade.

Mr. Barbour, from the committee of foreign relations, to whom had been referred the representations in behalf of Mr. Meade, made a report of considerable length, taking a full view of the subjects, recognizing the wrongs of Mr. Meade, and declaring, substantially, that if the demand of the executive for his release be not complied with, the offence ought to be visited with severe retribution.

Mr. Barbour submitted a bill to increase the salaries of the heads of department — per cent. on their present amount, which was read.

The bill adjusting the claims to land, and establishing land offices in the district east of the island of New-Orleans, had been previously much contested; and, on the question that the bill be engrossed for a third reading, it was decided as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Campbell, Daggett, Gaillard, Morrow, Roberts, Ruggles, Smith, Van Dyke, Williams.—9

NAYS—Messrs. Burrill, Dickerson, Eppes, Fromentin, Horsey, Hunter, Johnson, Lacock, Macon, Stokes, Storer, Talbot.—12.

So the bill was rejected.

Wednesday, March 25.

After the disposal of a number of petitions and the reading of several bills and reports received yesterday from the house of representatives, Mr. Troup submitted the following resolution:

Resolved, That the committee on the judiciary be instructed to inquire into the expediency of setting apart and appropriating the dividends which shall arise from the shares held by the government in the bank of the United States, to the manufacture of arms and equipments for arming and equipping the whole body of militia of the United States.

The bill concerning the bounty to fishing vessels; and the bill for altering the time of holding a session of the district court of the district of Maine, were read the third time and passed.

Several bills were read and ordered to be engrossed and read a third time. The senate then resumed the consideration of the bill to reduce the staff of the army; and, on the question of agreeing to the amendment reported by the military committee (to substitute a commissariat instead of the present mode of subsisting the army by contract,) it was determined in the affirmative, by yeas and nays, as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Barbour, Crittenden, Daggett, Eppes, Fromentin, Gaillard, Horsey, King, Lacock, Macon, Morrill, Morrow, Noble, Otis, Ruggles, Sanford, Smith, Stokes, Tait, Talbot, Taylor, Troup, Van Dyke, Williams of Miss. Williams of Ten.—25.

NAYS—Messrs. Burrill, Dickerson, Roberts, Tichenor, Wilson.—5.

The bill was then ordered to be engrossed and read a third time.

The bill to authorize the state of Tennessee to issue grants and perfect titles on certain entries and locations of lands, was taken up, and, after agreeing to various modifications, the bill was finally ordered to be engrossed and read a third time by the following vote:

YEAS—Messrs. Barbour, Burrill, Campbell, Daggett, Dickerson, Gaillard, Horsey, Johnson, King, Morrow, Noble, Otis, Roberts, Ruggles,

Storer, Tait, Tichenor, Van Dyke, Williams of Ten. Wilson.—20.

NAYS—Messrs. Macon, Stokes.—2.

A message in writing was received from the president communicating to congress information concerning the existing war with the Seminole Indians; which message, with the papers accompanying it, was read; and

The senate adjourned.

Thursday, March 26.

Much business of minor importance, was transacted in the sitting of this day. Mr. Troup's resolution submitted yesterday was agreed to. Several bills from the other house were read and referred. The joint resolution directing an index of the acts, &c. of congress to be annually prepared, was ordered to a third reading.

The joint resolution, offered by Mr. Barbour on the 9th December, proposing an amendment to the constitution, to give congress the power of appropriating money for the construction of roads and canals, with the consent of the states in which they are made, &c. was taken up; and postponed to the 1st of July, (rejected) by the following vote:

For the postponement—Messrs. Burrill, Campbell, Crittenden, Daggett, Eppes, Gaillard, Horsey, Hunter, King, Lacock, Morrill, Morrow, Ruggles, Sanford, Storer, Talbot, Taylor, Troup, Van Dyke, Williams of Miss. Williams of Ten. Wilson.—22.

Against the postponement—Messrs. Barbour, Dickerson, Fromentin, Macon, Roberts, Smith, Stokes, Tait, Tichenor.—9.

The bill to issue grants and perfect titles to certain locations of land; and the bill to reduce the staff of the army, were read the third time, passed and sent to the house.

The senate resumed the consideration of the bill to increase the salaries of the heads of departments and the attorney general, which was so modified as to fix the salaries of the secretaries of state and treasury each \$6500. Secretaries of war and navy each \$6000.

The post master general \$4000 and the attorney general \$3500, all to commence on the 1st day of the year 1818; which bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading.—Adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.*Thursday, March 19.*

Mr. Johnson of Ken. reported, without amendment, the bill from the senate extending the time for obtaining military land warrants, and for other purposes: which bill was read, a third time and passed.

Mr. Taylor submitted a joint resolution authorizing the transportation by mail, free of postage, by the members of congress, of the documents lately communicated by the president, respecting our relations with Spain, which was read three times passed and sent to the senate for concurrence.

On motion of Mr. Spencer, the secretary of state was directed to give information to the house whether a distribution has been made of the journals and documents published under the order of congress, according to the joint resolution of the 27th December, 1813, and to report what further provisions are necessary to ensure such distribution.

The bills mentioned in the proceedings of the senate yesterday, as having passed and sent to the house for concurrence were received, and severally read the third time and passed.

The Neutrality Bill

The house then again resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Desha in the chair, on the bill in addition to the "act for the punishment of certain crimes against the United States," and to repeal the acts therein mentioned—Mr. Clay's motion to add a section exempting vessels sailing under the flags of unrecognized governments, entering our ports, from the penalties of piracy, being still under consideration.

A good deal of discussion ensued, the committee having finally got through the bill, on motion of Mr. Lowndes it was laid on the table that the amendments might be printed.

Mr. Herrick's Right to a Seat.

The house then went again into a committee of the whole, Mr. Pleasants in the chair, on the report of the committee of elections, in the case of the disputed right of Mr. Herrick to his seat in consequence of having for some time after his election, held the office of United States' attorney for the district of Ohio. The report concludes with a resolution that Mr. H. is entitled to a seat—which resolution Mr. Adams yesterday moved to reverse.

A long debate ensued Messrs. Anderson Ken. and Forsyth opposed the right of the member to a seat in the house and Messrs. Johnson Ken. Spencer and Taylor, (chairman of the committee of elections) advocated the report and the right of the member to a seat, but before the debate was concluded the committee rose and obtained leave to sit again—Adjourned.

Friday, March 20.

Mr. Sergeant, from the committee of ways and means made a report favorable to allowing drawback on refined sugar exported and on spirits distilled from foreign materials.

The resolution of the legislature of Maryland, respecting the establishment of a naval depot within that state was referred to a select committee.

The committee on public lands were directed to inquire into the expediency of providing by law for the endorsement on each patent for military bounty land, of the surveyors' description of the soil, timber, &c, of the lot conveyed by such patent.

Kentucky and Ohio Canal Stock.

On motion of Mr. Anderson it was

Resolved, That the committee on so much of the president's message as relates to roads, canals, and seminaries of learning, be instructed to inquire into the propriety of authorizing the secretary of the treasury, to subscribe on behalf of the United States, for five hundred shares in the capital stock of Kentucky & Ohio canal company.

On motion of Mr. Sergeant it was

Resolved, That the president of the United States be and he is hereby requested to lay before this house, if not inconsistent with the public interest, any communications made to the department of state, relating to the occupation of Amelia Island, not heretofore communicated.

A message was received from the president relative to our relations with the Netherlands.

The speaker laid before the house a letter from the secretary of the treasury, transmitting reports respecting tonnage and certain imports and exports, made in obedience to the resolutions moved by Mr. Pitkin on the 29th of December last.

Mr. Herrick's Seat.

The house again went into committee of the whole on this subject, Mr. Smith of Md. in the chair—Mr. Adams' motion to reverse the report and vacate the seat of the member, being still under consideration, the debate was revived, Mr. Taylor concluded his speech in favor of the report, Mr. Hopkinson opposed it in a speech of an hour's length. Mr. Baldwin spoke in favor of Mr. Herrick's retaining his seat, Mr. Adams replied, after which

The question was taken on reversing the report of the committee of elections, and carried—ayes 67, noes 66.

The committee then rose and reported their decision to the house.

After a good deal of desultory conversation on various motions, touching the right of certain members to vote on the question, whose seats were supposed to be held under circumstances similar to that of Mr. Herrick, and therefore personally interested in the decision—and after refusing to excuse Mr. Barber of Ohio, and Mr. Hubbard of New-York, from voting—the question on concurring with the committee of the whole in reversing the report of the committee of elections, was decided in the negative, by yeas and nays, as follows:

Those who voted for concurring with the committee of the whole, and, of course, against the right of the member to a seat, were—

YEAS—Messrs. Abbott, Adams, Allen Mass. Anderson Ken. Austin, Ball, Barbour Va. Bateman, Bayley, Bercher, Beltinger, Bennett, Burwell, Claiborne, Cook, Crawford, Cushman, Darlington, Edwards, Ervin S. C. Floyd, Forsay, Forsyth, Garnett, Hogg, Holmes Con. Hopkinson, Huntington, Irving N. Y. Johnson Va. Little, Lowndes, McLane, Marr, Mason R. I. Middleton, Jer. Nelson, H. Nelson, Owen, Pawling, Peter, Pindell, Pleasants, Reed, Rhea, Rice, Richards, Robertson Lou. Ruggles, Sawyers, Schuyler, Sergeant, Seybert, Sherwood, Simkins, Slocumb, S. Smith, Bal. Smith, J. S. Smith, Speed, Stewart N. C. Terrell, Terry, Tompkins, Tucker Va. Tucker S. C. Walker Ken. Wendover, Westerlo, Whiteide, Williams Con. Williams N. Y. Williams N. C. Wilson Mass.—74.

Those who voted against concurring; and in favor of the member's keeping his seat, were—

NAYS—Messrs. Allen Vt. Anderson Pa. Baldwin, Barber Ohio, Bassett, Bloomfield, Blount, Boden, Boss, Buttler, Campbell, Cingett, Cobb, Comstock, Crafts, Cruger, Culbreth, Desha, Earle, Elliott, Folger, Gage, Hale, Hall Del. Harrison, Hasbrouck, Herkimer, Hitchcock, Holmes Mass. Hubbard, Hunter, Johnson Ken. Jones, Kinsey, Kirtland, Lawyer, Llan, Livermore, W. P. Macley, McCoy, Marchand, Mason Mass. Merrill, Moore, Morton, Mosely, Mumford, Murray, New, Ozie, Palmer, Patterson, Poindexter, Porter, Rich, Ringgold, Robertson Ken. Sampson, Savage, Scudder, Settle, Shaw, Silsbee, Southard, Spencer, Strong, Tallmadge, Tarr, Taylor, Townsend, Tyler, Upham, Walker N. C. Wallace, Whitman, Wilkin, Wilson Penn.—77.

The question was taken by yeas and nays, on agreeing with the committee of elections that Mr. Herrick is entitled to a seat, and decided in the affirmative—yeas 77, noes 70; and

The house adjourned.

Saturday, March 21.

Mr. Lowndes, from the committee of ways and means, reported the bill from the senate to authorize the secretary of the treasury to repay or to remit certain alien duties, without amendment, and the bill was committed to a committee of the whole house.

The speaker laid before the house a letter from the treasurer of the United States, transmitting the annual report of his accounts.

On motion of Mr. Simkins,

Resolved, That the committee on the public lands be instructed to inquire into the expediency of establishing other lands offices in the territory of Alabama than those already established, and of appointing other registers and receivers of public monies in addition to those already appointed.

On motion of Mr. Taylor,

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to enquire into the expediency of providing by law for an earlier commencement of the next session of congress than the stated period, with leave to report by bill or otherwise.

The rights of Elias Earle of S. C. and of George Mumford of N. C. to seats in the house of representatives were confirmed.

Several bills then passed through committees of the whole house and were ordered to a third reading and the house adjourned.

Monday, March 23.

Dissemination of the Laws.

Mr. Taylor submitted the following resolution, which was twice read and ordered to be engrossed and read a third time:

Resolved by the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled, That after the close of each session of congress, an alphabetical index of the acts and joint resolutions, passed at the preceding session, shall be prepared, printed and distributed therewith, under the direction of the secretary for the department of state.

Neutral Relations.

The house then proceeded to the consideration of the amendments reported by the committee of the whole, to the bill in addition to the act "to punish certain crimes against the United States," and to repeal the acts therein mentioned.

The amendments were successively agreed to, with the exception of the following, which was reported by the committee as a 14th section to the bill, to wit:

"Sec. 14. *And be it further enacted*, That in prosecutions either against persons or property, sailing under the flag of any colony, district or people which shall be admitted into the ports of the United States, it shall not be deemed ground for the punishment or condemnation of such person or property, that the sovereignty of such colony, district or people has not been acknowledged by the government of the United States. *Provided* That the colony district or people, aforesaid, have organized an existing government, claiming to be independent, at the time of commission of the fact of which the persons are charged.

Attempts were made variously to amend this section but none prevailed.

Mr. Lowndes then rose and moved that the bill and amendments be indefinitely postponed; which motion was decided in the negative, by yeas and nays as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Abbott, Adams, Allen, Mass. Allen Vt. Baldwin, Barbour Va. Bayley, Beecher, Bennett, Bass, Clegg, Cobb, Crafts, Cushman, Darlington, Earle, Edwards, Ervin S. C. Folger, Forsyth, Hall Del. Hall N. C. Hitchcock, Holmes Conn. Hopkinson, Hubbard, Hunter, Huntington, Lowndes, Vt. Lane, W. P. Mackay, Mason Mass. Mason R. L. Mercer, Middleton, Norton Mosley, Jer. Nelson, H. Nelson, Ogden, Parrott, Pawling, Pindall, Pitkin, Poindexter, Reed, Rhoads, Rice, Richards, Ruggles, Schuyler, Sergeant, Sherwood, Stibbe, Simkins, Stoughton, S. Smith, Alex. Smyth,

J. S. Smith, Stewart N. C. Strong, Strother, Stuart Md. Taylor, Terry, Townsend, Western, Whitman, Williams Conn. Williams N. Y. Williams N. C. Wilson Mass.—73.

NAYS—Messrs. Anderson Penn. Anderson Ken. Ball, Barber Ohio, Bassett, Beaman, Bloomfield, Blount, Boden, Burwell, Campbell, Claiborne, Comstock, Cruger, Culbreth, Deha, Elliott, Floyd, Forney, Gage, Harrison, Hasbrouck, Hogg, Holmes Mass. Irving N. Y. Johnson Va. Johnson Ken. Jones, Kinsey, Lawyer, Linn, Little, McCoy, Marchand, Marr, Merrill, Moore, Mumford, Murray, T. M. Nelson, New, Ogil, Owen, Palmer, Patterson, Peter, Pinckney, Porter, Rich, Ringgold, Robertson Ken. Robertson Lou. Sampson, Savage, Sawyer, Scudder, Settle, Seybert, Shaw, Ballard Smith, Southard, Speed, Tucker Va. Talmadge, Tarr, Terrell, Tompkins, Trimble, Tucker Va. Tyler, Walker N. C. Walker Ken. Wallace, Wendover, Whiteside, Wilkins, Wilson Penn.—70.

The following amendment proposed by Mr. Tucker was adopted: strike out the words "which shall be admitted" and to insert, after "United States," the words "under the instructions of the president of the United States, to the several collectors of the customs."

And the following proviso was added to the section on motion of Mr. Smith of Md.

Provided, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to affect the right of citizens of the United States, who may prosecute in the courts of the United States for property taken from them on the high seas;" after which,

The section as amended, was agreed to.

Mr. Tucker of Va. moved to strike out the 10th and 11th section of the bill, in the following words:

Sec. 10. *And be it further enacted*, That the owners or consignees of every armed ship or vessel sailing out of the ports of the United States, belonging wholly or in part to citizens thereof, shall enter into bond to the United States with sufficient sureties prior to clearing out the same, in double the amount of the value of the vessel and cargo on board, including her armament, that the said ship or vessel shall not be employed by such owners to cruise or commit hostilities against the subjects, citizens or property, of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district, or people with whom the United States are at peace.

Sec. 11. *And be it further enacted* That the collectors of the customs be, and they are hereby respectively authorized and required, to detain any vessel manifestly built for warlike purposes; and about to depart the United States, of which the cargo shall principally consist of arms and munitions of war; when the number of men shipped on board or other circumstances shall render it probable that such vessel is intended to be employed by the owner or owners to cruise or to commit hostilities upon the subjects, citizens, or property of any foreign prince or state, or of any colony, district or people, with whom the United States are at peace, until the decision, of the president be had thereon, or until the owner or owners shall give such bond and security as is required of the owners of armed ships by the preceding section of the act.

The question being divided, was first taking on striking out the tenth section, and decided in the negative, by yeas and nays as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Anderson Penn. Anderson Ken. Bellinger, Campbell, Claiborne, Comstock, Cruger, Culbreth, Deha, Earle, Floyd, Folger, Forney, Gage, Harrison, Herkimer, Johnson Va. Johnson Ken. Kinsey, Little, Marchand, Marr, Mumford, H. Nelson, T. M. Nelson, New, Ogil, Owen, Patterson, Poindexter, Porter, Quarles, Robertson Lou. Sawyer, Settle, Shaw, Spencer, Tarr, Trimble, Tucker Va. Tyler, Walker Ken. Wallace, Whiteside—44.

NAYS—Messrs. Abbott, Adams, Allen Mass. Allen Vt. Baldwin, Ball, Barbour Va. Bassett, Bayley, Beecher, Bennett, Bloomfield, Boden, Ross, Burwell, Butler, Clegg, Cobb, Crafts, Cushman, Darlington, Edwards, Elliott, Folger,

Hale, Hall Del. Hall N. C. Hasbrouck, Hogg, Holmes, Con-
Hopkinson, Hunter, Huntington, Irving N. Y. Kirtland, Law-
yer, Linn, Livermore, Lowndes, McLane, W. P. Macleay, Ma-
son Mass. Mason R. L. Mercer, Middleton, Moore, Mosely,
Murray, Jer. Nelson, Ogden, Palmer, Parrott, Pawling, Peter,
Pindall, Pitkin, Pleasant, Reed, Rice, Rich, Richards,
Ruggles, Roberton Ken. Rogers, Sampson, Schuyler,
Sedder, Sergeant, Seybert, Slocumb, S. Smith, Bal. Smith,
Alex. Smyth, Speed, Stewart N. C. Strong, Strother, Stuart,
M. Taylor, Terrell, Terry, Tompkins, Townsend, Upham,
Walker N. C. Wendover, Westerlo, Whitman, Williams Con.
Williams N. Y. Williams N. C. Wilkin, Wilson Mass. Wilson
Pa.—95.

The question was next put on striking out the
11th section, as above stated, and decided also in
the negative.

The question was then taken on ordering the
bill to be engrossed as amended and read a third
time, and carried, by yeas and nays, as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Abbott, Anderson Pa. Anderson Ken. Ball,
Barbour Va. Barber Ohio, Bassett, Bereber, Bellinger, Bloom-
field, Boden, Burwell, Campbell, Claiborne, Cook, Crafts,
Gauger, Culbreth, Deha, Edwards, Elliot, Floyd, Forsyth,
Forsyth, Hale, Hall N. C. Harrison, Hasbrouck, Herkimer,
Hitchcock, Hogg, Holmes M. Hubbard, Irving N. Y. Johnson
Va. Jones, Kinney, Kirtland, Lawyer, Linn, Little, Livermore,
McCoy, Marchand, Marr, Merrill, Moore, Mumford, Murray,
H. Nelson, T. M. Nelson, New, Ogden, Palmer, Parrott,
Pamerson, Peter, Pleasant, Poindexter, Porter, Quarles,
Rich, Ringgold, Robertson Ken. Robertson Lun. Sampson,
Sawyer, Sedder, Settle, Seybert, Shaw, Silabee, S. Smith,
Bal. Smith, Speed, Spencer, Strother, Tallmadge, Tarr,
Taylor, Terrell, Tompkins, Townsend, Triunbe, Tucker
Va. Tucker S. C. Tyler, Walker N. C. Walker Ken. Wallace,
Wendover, Whiteside, Wilkin, Wilson, Pa.—95.

NAYS—Messrs. Adams, Allen Mass. Allen Vt. Baldwin,
Bayley, Beaman, Rose, Claggett, Cobb, Cushman, Darlington,
Earle, Folger, Gage, Hall Del. Holmes Con. Hopkinson, Hun-
ter, Huntington, Lowndes, McLane, W. P. Macleay, Mason
Mass. Mason R. L. Mercer, Middleton, Mosely, Jer. Nelson,
Ogden, Pawling, Pindall, Pitkin, Reed, Rice, Richards,
Ruggles, Schuyler, Sergeant, Slocumb, Alex. Smyth, Ste-
wart N. C. Strong Stuart, M. Terry, Westerlo, Whitman, Wil-
kins Con. Williams N. Y. Williams N. C. Wilson Mass.—51.

Several engrossed bills, heretofore ordered to a
third reading, were read a third time and passed.

Tuesday, March 24,

A great portion of this day's sitting was taken
taken up in receiving petitions, hearing reports
and bills from committees, &c. &c.

The resolution for directing the secretary of
state to prepare annually an index to the laws and
resolutions of congress, was read a third time and
passed.

National Flag.

The house resolved itself into a committee of
the whole, Mr. Desha in the chair, on the bill to
alter the flag of the United States, [providing that
from and after the fourth day of July next, the
flag of the United States be thirteen horizontal
stripes, alternate red and white; that the union
be twenty stars, white in a blue field; and that on
the admission of every new state into the Union,
one star be added to the union of the flag, and
that such addition shall take effect on the fourth
day of July then next succeeding.]

Mr. Wendover sustained the expediency of
adopting the regulation proposed by the bill, in a
speech of some length.

Several attempts were made to amend and mo-
dify the bill, none of which prevailed. The bill was
ordered to be engrossed and read a third time.

Appropriations for 1818.

The house then resolved itself into a committee
of the whole, Mr. Desha in the chair, making ap-
propriations for the support of government for
the year 1818.

After going through the details of the bill, Mr.
Clay moved to insert in the bill a provision to ap-
propriate \$18,000 as the outfit, and one year's sa-

lary of a minister to be deputed from the United
States to the independent provinces of the river
La Plata, in South America.

This proposition Mr. Clay followed up by en-
tering into a discussion of the question, involved
in his motion, of a formal recognition of the inde-
pendence of the South American states men-
tioned. He continued his arguments until the
house adjourned.

Wednesday, March 25.

A resolution was adopted to prevent waste and
trespass on public lands reserved for the use of
schools.

The engrossed bill "in addition to the act for
the punishment of certain crimes against the U.
States, and to repeal the acts therein mentioned,"
and the engrossed bill to establish the flag of the
United States, were severally read the third time,
passed, and sent to the senate.

Appropriation for 1818, or Independence of South America.

The house having resolved itself into commit-
tee of the whole, Mr. Desha in the chair, on
this, Mr. Clay resumed his speech, which was in-
terrupted yesterday by the adjournment of the
house, which he continued about three hours, in
support of his proposition. He was followed and
opposed by Mr. Forsyth for about two hours, af-
ter when the committee rose, reported progress,
and obtained leave to sit again.

Seminole War.

The following message was received from the
president of the United States.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the
United States.

I now lay before Congress all the information
in the possession of the executive, respecting the
war with the Seminoles, and the measures, which
it has been thought proper to adopt, for the safety
of our fellow-citizens, on the frontier exposed to
their ravages. The enclosed documents shew
that the hostilities of this tribe were unprovoked,
the offspring of a spirit, long cherished and often
manifested towards the United States, and that
in the present instance, it was extending
itself to other tribes, and daily assuming a more
serious aspect. As soon as the nature and object
of this combination were perceived, the Major
General commanding the southern Division of
the troops of the United States, was ordered to
the theatre of action, charged with the manage-
ment of the war, and vested with the powers ne-
cessary to give it effect. The season of the year
being unfavorable to active operations, and the
recesses of the country affording shelter to these
savages, in case of retreat, may prevent a prompt
termination of the war, but it may be fairly pre-
sumed, that it will not be long before this tribe
and its associates receive the punishment which
they have provoked and justly merited.

As almost the whole of this tribe inhabits the
country within the limits of Florida, Spain was
bound, by the treaty of 1795, to restrain them
from committing hostilities against the U. States.
We have seen, with regret, that her government
has altogether failed to fulfil this obligation, nor
are we aware that it made any effort to that ef-
fect. When we consider her utter disability to
check, even in the slightest degree, the move-
ments of this tribe; by her very small and incohe-

petent force in Florida, we are not disposed to ascribe the failure to any other cause. The inability, however, of Spain, to maintain her authority over the territory and Indians, within her limits, and in consequence to fulfil the treaty, ought not to expose the United States to other and greater injuries. Where the authority of Spain ceases to exist, there the United States have a right to pursue their enemy, on a principle of self-defence. In this instance, the right is more complete and obvious, because we shall perform only what Spain was bound to have performed herself.—To the high obligations and privileges of this great and sacred right of self-defence, will the movement of our troops be strictly confined. Orders have been given to the general in command not to enter Florida, unless it be in pursuit of the enemy, and in that case to respect the Spanish authority wherever it is maintained; and he will be instructed to withdraw his forces from the province, as soon as he shall have reduced that tribe to order, and secured our fellow citizens in that quarter, by satisfactory arrangements, against its unprovoked and savage hostilities in future.

JAMES MONROE.

Washington, March 25, 1818.

Two other messages were received from the president also, with accompanying documents.—One transmitting information relative to the Spanish South American provinces; the other a statement of the items of expenditure by the commissioners under the treaty of Ghent, which were ordered to lie on the table and be printed. Adjourned.

From the Georgia Journal Extra, of the 11th March.

SKIRMISH WITH THE INDIANS.

The following was received this evening by express to the governor:

Sir—I have this moment received information through Mr. Isham Jordon, of Telfair county, which I rely on, of a skirmish between the Indians and some of the citizens of Telfair on the south side of the Ocmulgee river in the afternoon of the 9th inst. 20 or 25 miles below this.

On the night of the 3d inst. Joseph Bush and his son were fired upon by a party of Indians, the father killed and the son severely wounded and scalped, but he so far recovered as to reach home in two days after. The citizens receiving information of the foregoing facts, assembled on the 9th instant to the number of 36, and crossed the river in the forenoon to seek redress. Finding considerable sign of Indians, they pursued the trail leading from the river some distance out, where they came in view of a body of Indians, 50 or 60, advancing within gun shot. The firing was commenced by each party and warmly kept up for three quarters of an hour. A part of the detachment effected their retreat, bringing off one badly wounded—four are certainly killed—the balance of the detachment has not been heard from—Major Cothorn (commandant of the Telfair militia) is among the missing. Four Indians were killed.

From information, the citizens below this are much alarmed and leaving their homes. I have thought proper to communicate the foregoing to you by express.

I am your excellency's most obedient servant,

RICH^d. H. THOMAS, Lt. Col.

We understand that, Gen. BERNARD of the engineer department, submitted yesterday to the heads of departments, drafts of the coast of the United States, which he has prepared, designating the necessary and proper points for the erection of forts and fortifications, the whole executed with much skill and judgement, and which was highly approved.

A rumor prevailed at Milledgeville for a day or two, that gen. Gaines and maj. Wright had been lost in descending Flint river to fort Scott, but which was contradicted on the 13th. If we judge from the information derived from the newspapers and extracts of letters, the Indians are becoming very troublesome on the frontiers. It is hoped, however, that gen. Jackson will chastise them into a more pacific disposition.

A rumor prevailed at Savannah on the 18th inst. that the Indians had made an unsuccessful attempt to surprise the forces under the command of gen. Jackson, at a place called the Hammock, near Flint river. That 500 of the enemy were left dead on the field, and among them several whites and negroes. Jackson is represented as having lost 100 men in killed and wounded.

One hundred Indians made their appearance on the Satillas, about 16 miles from Bethel, Glynn county, Georgia, on the 10th inst. who killed one white man which occasioned much alarm among the inhabitants, who were moving off.

Explosion.—On the morning of the 19th inst. a dreadful explosion took place in the Powder mills belonging to Dupont, in the vicinity of Wilmington, Del. We have seen various statements as to the quantity of powder exploded, which seem to be about 25 or 30 tons. Thirty three persons lost their lives, and ten were wounded.

The last accounts say that the principal magazine, full of gunpowder, has entirely escaped from injury, and that at the factory, where the accident happened, the extensive and valuable refinery, with the drying house, and a quantity of finished gunpowder, was saved. The great stock of raw materials, being at a distance, was not endangered, and the remaining works continue in active operation.

Gen. Mina not Dead.—The Baltimore papers state that letters have been received of a very late date in that city, from Gen. Mina himself and from his aid. These letters represent the affairs of Mina to be in a more prosperous situation than at any time heretofore.

A mistake.—In our last number, the compositor in making up the last page accidentally omitted a few introductory lines to an extract of a letter from E——n Md. headed *worthy of imitation*, part of the edition was sent out before the error was discovered.